

WAR CRIMES

Death warrant for JP leader Kaisar

UNB, Dhaka

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) yesterday issued death warrant for Syed Mohammad Kaisar for his crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

The full verdict of the Supreme Court, upholding the death penalty of Jatiya Party leader and former state minister Kaisar, has been received and sent to the office concerned, said Syed Ahmed, registrar of the ICT.

The death warrant has been sent to the Dhaka Central Jail, Keraniganj, secretaries to the home and law ministries and the district magistrate.

Kaisar can file a petition seeking review of the death penalty within 15 days.

On January 14, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the death penalty of the JP leader, handed down by the ICT for his crimes against humanity.

The full SC verdict was published on Wednesday.

On January 23, 2014, the ICT sentenced Kaisar to death. The ICT also sentenced him to death on seven charges, life-term imprisonment on four charges and 22-year-jail on three other charges.

Later, Kaisar filed an appeal petition against the verdict.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This man, spotted walking off with a fledgling pond heron in the capital's Baily Road yesterday, said the bird fell from a tree and he is taking it away as a pet. Locals, however, said a large number of herons nested in the trees of the area during the last six months when the ever-bustling city practically went to sleep. Now that usual life has returned, some floating people often pick up young birds from the trees and take them away.

When will it be ready?

Work for underpass promised following deaths of 2 students unfinished in 2yrs

HELEMUL ALAM

On July 29, 2018, a bus rammed into Dia Khanam Mim and Abdul Karim Rajib, both students of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College, killing them and injuring 12 others while they were standing on the pavement at a bus stop on Airport Road in the capital.

The deaths triggered a nationwide protest calling for road safety by their classmates and students across the country, which eventually prompted the government to approve the long-delayed road transport law.

Amid the movement, the family members of the two students and the principal of the college met the prime minister on August 2 that year where the PM promised to construct an underpass near the college.

It has been more than two years, but the underpass is yet to be completed. As a result, pedestrians and students of the college and other institutions in Kurmitola area continue to cross the busy Airport Road amid risks.

On August 12, 2018, the premier laid the foundation stone of the underpass at an event on the college premises.

The Roads and Highways Department began the construction work on September 26, 2018. The deadline for the Tk 57 crore project ended in June this year and now has been extended till June next year.

"Around 98 percent of the work has already been completed. But due to the ongoing pandemic, we could not complete it," said Md Shamim Al Mamun, executive engineer of RHD. "We are at the final stage. We will be able to complete the work before the new schedule -- June 2021," he told The Daily Star recently.

The underpass is 53-metre long and its width is 3.5-metre. The thoroughfare is connected with north and north-east and western districts. Bangladesh Army is implementing the project.

Once built, it will facilitate safe movement of pedestrians as large numbers of commuters and students of different educational institutions cross the street daily.

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ATTACK ON SURANJIT, SAMS KIBRIA

Trials of 3 cases begin in Sylhet

Lufazzaman Babar, Ariful among charged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Trial of three sensational cases -- attempted murder of former AL leader Suranjit Sengupta, grenade attack in his rally, and grenade attack in former Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria -- began at a Sylhet court yesterday.

In all three cases, Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal framed charges against former state minister for home Lufazzaman Babar, Sylhet City Mayor Ariful Haque Chowdhury, former Habiganj Mayor GK Gous and others.

In the attempted murder case of Suranjit and explosive case filed for attacking his rally on June 21, 2004, the court framed charge against the trio along with seven others, Sarwar Hossain Abdal, public prosecutor of the tribunal said. In the explosive case filed for grenade attack in Kibria's rally on January 27, 2005, charges against the trio and 25 others were framed, he added.

Meanwhile, testimony-recording of witnesses in the murder case of Kibria was deferred as some witnesses were not present, he said.

The prosecutor said, "With the charge framing of the cases, trial began after a long wait."

On June 21, 2004, a grenade attack took place at the rally of Suranjit Sengupta at Derai upazila bazaar in Sunamganj. Suranjit escaped death but a Jubo League activist was killed and 29 others were injured.

On January 27, 2005, another grenade attack took place in Baidyerbazar of Habiganj Sadar where Shah AMS Kibria and four others died.

'Lasting solution only possible if there's no impunity'

Dutch Ambassador Harry Verweij on Rohingya crisis in Myanmar

PORIMOL PALMA

A lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis in Rakhine and the situation in other parts of Myanmar is only possible if there is no impunity, Dutch Ambassador to Bangladesh, Harry Verweij, has said.

"Justice and accountability for gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, regardless of who commits it, is necessary to foster conditions for durable peace and national reconciliation in Myanmar," he said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star yesterday.

Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok recently wrote a letter to Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen.

Harry Verweij handed over the letter to Momen on October 18 ahead of The Gambia's submission of its memorial on the Rohingya genocide to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the top UN court, today.

Asked about the content of the letter, the ambassador said with the letter, The Netherlands confirms its intention, together with Canada, to intervene in the case brought by The Gambia.

The case shows the discrimination and persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar, which created the conditions for Myanmar's security forces to perpetrate atrocities against the Rohingya.

Myanmar's violations include the commission of genocide against the Rohingya, mostly by way of the systematic and widespread perpetration of mass murder, sexual violence, torture, forced displacement, and denial of access to food and shelter. These conditions have caused over 850,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh since 2016.

The Gambia filed the case more than two years after a brutal military crackdown against the Rohingya in

2017 when 750,000 of them fled to Bangladesh from Rakhine state.

"As States Party to the Genocide Convention, The Netherlands and Canada consider it our obligation to support the laudable step The Gambia took," the Dutch envoy said.

Its objectives include ending impunity for those committing atrocities in Myanmar, upholding the pledge to prevent genocide and holding those responsible to account.

Harry Verweij said The Netherlands will assist with the complex legal issues that are expected to arise and will pay special attention to crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, against the Rohingya.

The joint application by The Netherlands and Canada will be submitted to the ICJ after the deadline, which is July 23, 2021, for receiving all documents from both The Gambia and Myanmar.

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POLLS CODE VIOLATION

SC upholds Nixon Chowdhury's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that granted anticipatory bail to lawmaker Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, known as Nixon Chowdhury, in a case over violations of the electoral code of conduct.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Nuruzzaman passed "no order" on a petition filed by the state seeking a stay on the HC order of bail to Nixon Chowdhury.

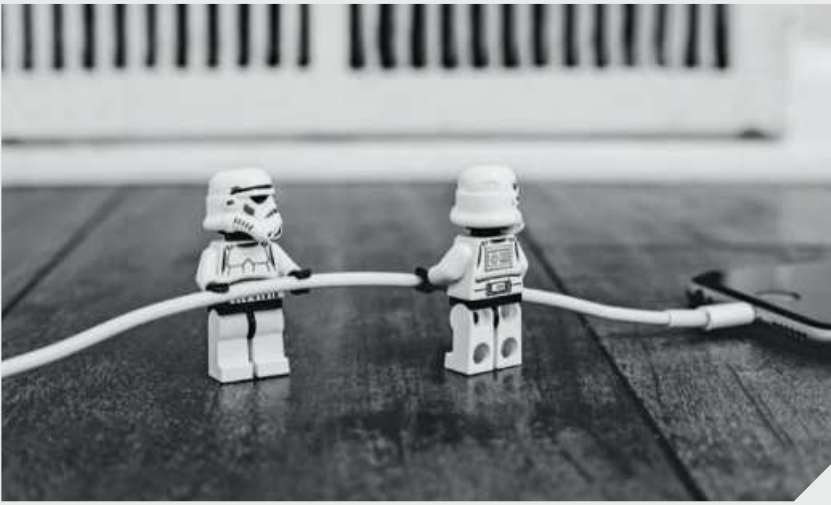
The apex court chamber judge's "no order" means that the HC's anticipatory bail to Nixon Chowdhury will remain in force, Assistant Attorney General Md Saiful Alam told The Daily Star.

Lawyers Abdul Baset Majumdar and Sayeed Ahmed Raza appeared for Nixon Chowdhury during hearing of the stay petition before SC chamber judge's court.

On October 20, the HC granted anticipatory bail to Nixon Chowdhury, for eight weeks on some conditions in the case over violations of the electoral code of conduct.

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MINI BYTES



Apple ditches the charger: Smart or outright madness?

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Apple decided to leave out their phone charger as they sell the new iPhone 12. People went nuts and the meme community had a field day for about a week. In normal human terms, that week is like several hundred years' worth of #lols at Apple's expense. But who really got the last laugh?

Apple lost up to \$81 billion in market value as shares tumbled 4% following the iPhone 12 launch. All because they wanted to exclude a phone charger. Other brands jumped on the bandwagon to quickly suggest how they offer so much more because their prices INCLUDE a charger. Yep, that is the big draw apparently when what consumers really want is an excellent display and a feature laden camera above all else.

1 billion cellphones go into production annually. While phones eventually become outdated, chargers typically do not. So each device has a charger which just keeps piling up, somewhere. Starts from an unused drawer at home and ends up likely in a landfill. Apple's logic is that by excluding a charger they are reducing the carbon footprint. They are friends of the planet and the polar bears who, let's face it, don't like the warm weather much and would tweet

against it if they knew how to.

The glitch in this pro-environment move is that Apple's devices generally use the proprietary Lightning port which requires its own cable. Everyone else has adopted the USB-C. Only last year's Pro models from Apple got the USB-C chargers.

Apple shipped more than 200 million phones last year which means a lot of Lightning cables. If they really want to reduce waste, adopting the USB-C would be a start. Which is likely their stumbling, cautious direction anyways with other manufacturers following suit.

An average cellphone user replaces their unit once every 18 months. Phones, especially flagships last much, much longer. If you scour the second hand and refurbished market you will see phones three generations old still making the rounds. To put that into context, we generate around 40 million tons of electronic waste every year, worldwide. Only 12.5% of that is recycled with 85% going to landfills and incinerators. Reusing older, existing chargers is a small yet good step forward.

Remember the 3mm headphone jack? No one is really missing that anymore. No one will miss a non-bundled charger either. You just have to wait for the memes to pass.

Ex-husband held for attacking councillor with sharp weapon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, CUMILLA

A councillor of Cumilla City Corporation was allegedly attacked by her former husband at the town's Muradpur yesterday.

Injured Nehar Begum is a reserved-seat councillor for wards 16-18. She is being treated at Cumilla Medical College Hospital (CuMCH).

Police arrested the ex-husband, Rafikul Islam Rukku, from Chawkbazar Bus Stand area, in the afternoon, said Jakir Hossain, in-charge of Chawkbazar police outpost. The family also filed a case with Kotwali Police Station against Rafikul and some unidentified persons.

Quoting his mother, Nehar's son Jahirul Islam Sumon said Rafikul tried to slash her throat with a box cutter when she went for a morning walk in front of their house.

"Luckily, the cutter injured the side of her neck, which left a long cut. Due to the attack, she fell on the road and he fled. Locals rescued and took her to the hospital," he said.

The family alleged that Rafikul was involved in different objectionable activities and often quarrelled with them. Due to these reasons, in 2018, Nehar filed for divorce, they added.

Meanwhile, the councillor is out of danger now, said doctors at the hospital.

Dr Mushfiq Ahmed, who was on emergency duty at the hospital, said, "We had to put 30 stitches on her neck. A sharp lethal weapon was used for the attack."

Submit report on death of 3 minors

HC asks Jashore child dev centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court (HC) bench has issued a rule instructing Jashore Child Development Centre to submit an investigation report on the death of three inhabitants within three months.

The rule was issued in response to a writ petition filed by Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), seeking permission to visit the development centre to observe the standard of care being provided to the children there, a press release circulated by BNWLA said.

On August 13, three minor inmates of the juvenile detention centre were allegedly tortured to death by several staffers and senior inmates. Fifteen others were also injured.

"The HC bench of Justice Md Mojibur Rahman Miah and Justice Mohiuddin Shamim also questioned in the rule why Advocate Salma Ali and BNWLA will not be allowed to visit the youth detention centres to monitor the care being received by the convicted children," said the press release.

"Following the death of the three children, we need to independently verify the situation inside the youth detention centres run by the government," Salma Ali said.

The statement added that the writ petition was filed by Advocate Nahid Mahtab and Advocate Rumana Haque.

Shilpakala halls set to welcome audience today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is reopening three of its theatre halls -- Studio Theatre Hall, National Theatre Hall and Experimental Theatre Hall -- today, after remaining closed for seven months.

Theatre artists and staff are excited to resume their work at the location after a long time.

From now, two plays can be held at the halls per week, on Friday and Saturday.

Today, Jagoroni Theatre will stage their play "Rajar Chithi" at Experimental Theatre Hall. Palakar will stage "Ujane Mrityu" at National Theatre Hall, and Theatre Factory will stage "Asharosso

Prothom Diboshe" tomorrow.

Besides, theatre troupe "Kheyali" will hold a tribute programme at Studio Theatre Hall today.

Commenting on the reopening, noted director and playwright Mamunur Rashid told The Daily Star, "As a person invested in theatre, I can say that this is an immensely joyous moment for us. We are going to stage the play 'Kohe Facebook' this month."

Renowned theatre personality Ferdousi Majumdar said, "Our troupe is planning on staging a play in November. We are overwhelmed with happiness."

Authorities had decided to close the halls on March 18 due to the pandemic.



Members of reputed troupe Dhaka Theatre rehearsing for their new production "Ektu Loukik Othoba Oloukik Streamer" at Shilpakala Acdemy. The play will premiere next Friday.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

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